

REMARKS

This application, as amended herein, contains claims 1 - 3, 6, 7, 10, 11, 15, 16, 20, 21 - 23, 26, 27, 30, 31, 35, 36, 40 - 45, 48, 49, 52, 57, 58, and 62. Claims 4, 5, 8, 9, 12 - 14, 17 - 19, 24, 25, 28, 29, 32 - 34, 37 - 39, 46, 47, 50, 51, 53 - 56, and 59 - 61 have been canceled.

Some minor amendments have been made in the specification to correct obvious errors. No new matter has been added.

In response to the various rejections, independent claims 1, 21 and 43 have all been amended to provide for sampling portions of the speech, and providing portions in reverse order. This provides a simple and inexpensive way to sample the speech, and use it to provide speech masking, without complex and expensive systems such as frequency inverters, random number generators and filters. While these components can be used, as noted in the dependent claims, Applicants' invention, as set forth in the independent claims, simply requires sampling and using the samples in reverse order.

The Examiner has noted in the office action, at page 4, paragraph 9, that Resnick does not disclose that the speech masking signal is produced by sampling portions of the speech and providing the portions in reverse order. However, the Examiner then relies on Hillis et al. It is respectfully submitted that Applicants' invention as set forth in independent claims 1, 21 and 43 is simply not suggested by the prior art. Hillis et al. teach rather

complex signal processing, including selection of speech segments randomly or by classification and identification procedures dependent on frequency. There is no teaching or suggestion of using speech in reverse order, and thus Hillis et al, adds nothing to Resnick which would render Applicants' invention obvious. It is respectfully submitted that the Examiner has not offered any reason for why someone with knowledge of the teachings of Hollis et al. would come to the conclusion that the speech should be sampled, and portions provided in reverse order. Applicants' invention may, in hindsight, seem simple, but the test for obviousness must look forward, and not backward. At the time the invention was made, there was simply no teaching or suggestion of sampling the speech, and using portions in reverse order to provide a speech masking signal. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1, 21 and 43, as amended herein, are directed to patentable subject matter.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the rejections of claims 1, 21 and 43 should be withdrawn.


The remaining claims depend from one of claims 1, 21 and 43. These claims include further recitations, which in combination with those in the independent claim from which they depend, are not disclosed or suggested in the art of record. While the Examiner has pointed out what is these claims is in the cited prior art, there is no teaching or suggestion that these limitations may be combined with those recited in claims 1, 21 and 43. Thus, for the reasons set forth above with respect to claims 1, 21 and

43, it is submitted that these claims are also directed to patentable subject matter.

In view of the allowable nature of the subject matter of all of the claims, if the Examiner cannot issue an immediate allowance, it is respectfully requested that the undersigned be contacted to resolve any remaining issues.

Applicants respectfully request an extension of time. A check in the amount of \$1,050 for a three-month extension of time is enclosed.

Respectfully submitted,



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